

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated May 29, 2007, the Examiner acknowledged the filing of an RCE, withdrew the finality of the previous rejection, and entered the Amendment filed on April 16, 2007. The Examiner also objected to claim 28, rejected claims 28-38 under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, rejected claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-15, 21, 22, 24-32, 35, 37 and 38 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by Meadow in US Patent 4,916,308, rejected claims 1-3, 6-19, 21, 22, 24-32 and 35-38 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by Graham in US Patent 5,914,709, rejected claims 1-3, 6-9, 12-22, 24, 28-32, 37 and 38 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by Francis in US Patent 6,181,842, rejected claims 4,5, 33 and 34 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Meadows, rejected claims 11, 16-19, and 36 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Meadows and Graham, rejected claim 20 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Meadows and Francis, rejected claim 23 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Meadows and Hoshino in US Publication 2002/0030668, rejected claims 4, 5, 33 and 34 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Graham, rejected claim 20 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Graham and Francis, rejected claim 23 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Graham and Hoshino, rejected claims 4, 5, 33 and 34 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Francis, and rejected claim 23 under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Francis and Hoshino. In response thereto, the Applicant has amended claims 1-11, 13, 15-16, 18, 20-25, 27-36, and 38. Claims 1-38 remain at issue.

The Objection to the Claims

The Applicant has amended claim 28 to correct the typographical error noted by the Examiner. The Applicant requests that this objection now be withdrawn. A similar correction was also made to claim 1.

35 USC 112, First Paragraph Rejections

The undersigned is confused by the Examiner's 25 USC 112, first paragraph rejection, of claim 28. The Applicant has amended the claim as specified by the Examiner's handwriting in the copy of the claim attached to the Interview Summary prepared by the Examiner on April 16, 2007. It is therefore not clear why the Examiner has made this rejection. Further explanation is requested.

In spite of the lack of understanding of the rejection, the Applicant has amended claim 28. The claim as amended is fully supported by the specification as filed. Figure 1 shows X and Y light sources 16 and 18 which are provided to generate a lamina of light 12.

It is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection or provide more details as to why the rejection has been made.

The Art Rejection

The Examiner has rejected certain claims as being each anticipated by the Meadows, Graham and Francis references. The Applicant strongly disagrees. None of the references anticipate the claims of the present application.

Certain claims of the present application are directed to an input device that has a substantially continuous lamina of light. In contrast, the Meadows, Graham and Francis references all teach input devices that rely on a grid of discrete X and/or Y beams of light.

In accordance with "www.allwords.com", an online dictionary, the term "lamina is defined as a ***thin plate or layer of material...***" See the definition of the term as printed off the above-identified web site and attached as Appendix A. In contrast, each of the cited references teach the use of a grid of light for their respective input devices. (<http://www.allwords.com/query.php?SearchType=3&Keyword=Lamina&goquery=Find+it!&Language=ENG>)

The Meadows reference teaches, as illustrated in Figure 1, an input device that relies on an X-Y grid of light. A Y-emitting LED 52 is arranged to emit a continuous ***beam*** of light along a first column of pixels 54. See column 4, lines 15-19. An X-emitting LED 58 produces another continuous ***beam*** of light 59 along a row 60 of pixels 28. See column 4, lines 23-28. The Meadows reference therefore teaches an optical touch panel that relies on beams of light, not a lamina of light.

The Graham reference teaches an optical input device that relies exclusively on a grid of light. See for example the following specific teachings in the Graham reference:

- i. the Abstract which describes a ***grid of light*** created from a waveguides;
- ii. Figure 1 shows a plurality of light beams 106 generated by collimating lenses 116. See column 4, lines 13-16 and 39-41;
- iii. Figure 3 shows an input device 300 that generates ***parallel light beams***. See Column 5, lines 25-28;
- iv. Figure 4 shows another input device 400 with waveguides 410 and 412 that generate ***horizontal 418 and vertical 420 beams of light***. See column 6, lines 28-64;
- v. Figure 5 shows two waveguides 502 and 504 configured to generate and receive parallel beams of light 508. See column 7, lines 57-67 and column 8 lines 1-9;
- vi. Figures 6A and 6B show cross sections of the waveguides 502/504 of Figure 5. See column 8, lines 11-15;

- vii. Figure 6E shows a flared output waveguide to reduce “diffractive spreading” of the light. See column 9, lines 38-47;
- viii. Figures 10B and 10C show beams of collimated light. See column 13, lines 14-23; and
- ix. Figures 11A and 11B show collimated beams of light 1106. See column 13, lines 28-34.

Similarly, the Francis reference also teaches the use of a grid of light for an input device. See for example the following specific teachings in Francis:

- i. with reference to Figure 1A, Francis teaches “*X send light beams 15X*” and “*Y send light beams 15Y*”. See column 5, lines 14-20 and column 9, lines 55-67;
- ii. with reference to Figure 1B, Francis teaches the transmission of collimated light beams by X and Y send optics systems 18X and 18Y respectively. See column 5, lines 44-55;
- iii. with reference to Figures 2A and 3, the optics 28 and 38 are provided to enhance the collimation of light beams. See column 6, lines 27-36; and
- iv. with reference to Figures 4 and 5, Francis again teaches the transmission of collimated light beams. See column 8, lines 22-31;

Based on the above, the Meadows, Graham and Francis references are each limited to an input device that relies on a grid of collimated light beams. All these references fail to teach the use of a substantially continuous layer of light (i.e., a lamina of light). Since none of the cited references teach a lamina of light, the claims of the present application are not anticipated.

The Double Patenting Rejection

In the event the Examiner indicates that the subject application contains allowable claims, a terminal disclaimer will be filed.

Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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APPENDIX A

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Displaying Items 1 through 1

Definitions**lamina***noun* laminae

1. A thin plate or layer of a material of uniform thickness, especially bone, rock or metal.
2. *bot.*
The flattened part of a leaf blade.

Etymology: 17c: Latin, meaning 'thin plate'.Content Under License from Crystal Reference, copyright 2003.Online Education
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